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Middlebury Register.

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POETRY.

THOUGHTS.

Suggested to W. H. W., on attending His Highness's Ball, Jan. 15, 1867.

O, welcome morn, whose clear unclouded light, Pours its effulgence on my natal day;

Another milestone reach'd and in their flight, The years remind me of my transient stay.

Our lives pass on like streams and gliding free From point to distant point, we move along To that fathomed, shoreless, boundless sea.

Which gathers in and holds the mighty throng, Till well, that midst a pilgrimage of tears, Hope glads a world beyond a murky tomb.

Though posied here, with clouds, and griefs, and fears, Faith lights a land devoid of winter, gloom O'world, how cold, and desolate and bare.

Att'nd on days, that bloom like summer flowers, Yet each gay year affords one day all fair— A center filled with most delicious hours.

Ab! truly well, just fifty years and four, Have I rowed me with their pains, to a great light, And should the kind reprieve attain'd, I'd chant His praise from morn 'till latest night.

MISCELLANY. The Eccentric Nabob. Some two or three miles from the small town of Aylesbury, England, there once lived three cousins, of the name of Barrett.

They were all married and resided on farms, within a mile of each other, and each of them had grown up children around them.

They were not rich, but in fair circumstances; each had expectations. An eccentric uncle had gone out to India when quite a young man, and rumor told them that he had become very wealthy, and would probably die a bachelor.

Who, then, but themselves would be heirs to his property?—they being at one time his nearest kin. One day the three families were thrown into great commotion by each of them receiving a letter, which contained besides date and signature, only these words:—

'I am rich. Foods call me a nabob. I wouldn't give such a title to a cat. No matter—I shan't live always—and when I die my property must go to somebody. I am coming to England to find an heir. I shall come and see you, and hope you will please me. I hope you are not troubled with beggars. I do not like to see them about.'

One dark, rainy night, about three weeks after the reception of these letters by the cousins, the family of Moses Barrett was thrown into a great state of excitement by the appearance at the door of two men in livery, who announced themselves as the avant couriers of his excellency, Joshua Barrett, of India, who would claim their hospitality for the night.

Saying which, the messengers put spurs to their horses and dashed away, without giving the astonished listeners time to ask a single question. Now, Moses Barrett was a hunk, his wife shrewd, and his three children enjup of the two blocks, but all undertook to change their natures for the time—or rather to be ready to change them on the appearance of the rich uncle—for what was the use of acting with the custom down.

'Now, Mose, you stinky old brute, said his wife, 'if you know on which side your bread's buttered, it's to be hoped you'll have some chickens killed for his excellency's supper, which is more'n you did for Christmas, and some wine fetched up that you've had in the cellar since the year one, and a fire made in the best room, that hasn't been there this ten years; and all our nice clothes put on, that ain't much, for you'd never allow us nothing decent to wear.'

'And it is to be hoped, old woman,' replied the angry husband, 'that you'll soften down that screeching voice of yours, and twist your wrinkles into smiles—and that'll be something I've never seen done since the first week of our marriage.'

Great anxiety was displayed by all the parties concerned, in preparing to give the rich uncle the best reception possible, and all rejoiced, as much as such a hopeful family could rejoice, that they would be the first to receive a visit from him—hoping, of course, that they might thus forestall the other relatives in his good graces. It would have been a strange way for any other person to have made his visit; but then, they knew the uncle was very eccentric, and his being so very wealthy made it all right in their eyes. He might come and stand on his head, provided he paid for his antics.

In the midst of their hurried preparations, there appeared at the door an old, feeble looking, white haired man, thin as a clod, and with his soiled garments clinging to his shriveled form.

'If you be kind enough, good people,' he said, 'to give me something to eat and a place to sleep to night?'

'We've got nothing to spare, and if you had, we don't harbor beggars!' replied the master of the house, in a coarse, brutal tone.

'But I'm old, and feeble, and hungry, and wet, and tired,' said the aged supplicant, in a pleading tone, 'and if you drive me away I may perish.'

'Well, that's just what you ought to have done long ago,' put in the cross dame. 'When people get too lazy to work for an honest living, and start out begging, it's my opinion that they are better dead now. Besides, we expect a company soon—a rich man, from India—and ain't got no room for the likes of you.'

'He entered a largely, plainly furnished apartment, and beheld a group of six persons—father, mother, two sons and two daughters, seated around a pleasant fire, with a bright light on the table near them, and all seeming contented and happy. On seeing his visitor was an old man and a stranger, the master of the house arose and invited him to walk forward and take a seat, and all the others drew back respectfully, to enlarge the circle and give him the best place at the fire.'

'I have called,' said the old man, stopping and removing his hat from his white head, 'to ask if you would be kind enough to give me some food and lodging for the night.'

POETRY.

THOUGHTS.

'Well, then,' returned the old man, with a sorrowful look, 'since you can't keep me over night, will you please give me something to eat, and I'll go further.'

'The dame brought up a piece of brown bread, with an angry look, and was about to hand it to the mendicant, more for the purpose, as it seemed, of getting rid of him than from any feeling of compassion, but her miserly husband interposed, and said, abruptly:—

'I told you we hadn't nothing for you, and so travel on!'

'I'll set the dog on you, if you don't, you old beggar!' cried a lad of ten. 'My rich uncle's coming here to night, and he can't bear beggars; so you had as good be going while your bones are whole.'

'My heaven be more merciful than you,' sighed the old man, as he turned and disappeared in the darkness.

Some half an hour later he knocked at the door of Stephen Barrett, and asked for food and lodging.

'It isn't convenient for us to keep you to night,' said the master of the house, in a mild, dignified tone. 'Besides, we don't like to encourage beggars. If you are poor and not able to work, the parish to which you belong is bound to support you. No one need starve in this country, which the Lord, praised be his name, has so bountifully blessed. I trust I am not wanting in charity—as an humble follower of the Lord Jesus Christ, I hope I am not—but what with taxes for the support of government and the poor, donations to benevolent societies and heathen missions, if it is as much as I can do to live and give my family a respectable maintenance. Now, my friend, if you are poor and not able to work, (though I don't see why you may not work as travel,) you had better throw yourself on the parish where you belong.'

'But I am tired, wet, and hungry,' said the old man, 'and all the parishes in the world can't do me any good to night. But you should have thought of that before you left home,' now closed in the good housewife, with a sanctified air. 'It is sinful to tempt Providence, as it is called; and whoever sins must expect punishment. I never go away without providing for the journey, and of course I don't expect anybody to feed and shelter me for nothing. It is a sin, too, to be idle, when one is able to work, and it is against my principle, as a true Christian, to encourage any one in sinning.'

'Then I suppose, I'm to understand that you refuse me both food and lodgings,' said the old man.

'As to food,' said the pious dame, glancing at her husband, 'if you are very hungry, I suppose we can do something for you in that way; but lodging is out of the question—for two mounted couriers have been here to say that a very rich uncle of ours, from India, will be here very soon; and he wrote some time ago that he didn't like to have beggars about where he was, and we wouldn't like to do anything to offend him. True, we hardly expect he will come to night; but then, he might, you know, and we wouldn't like to run any risks.'

'Well, then,' said the old man, 'I will take food, if you please, and go on even if I perish.'

'Put your trust in the Lord,' said Stephen Barrett, solemnly.

'Yes,' echoed his wife, 'put your trust in the Lord;—that is what we do in trouble. Sarah Jane, go down in the cellar and bring up a couple of those cold potatoes for this old rascal—they are very good eating when one is hungry—I like them myself. Yes, put your trust in the Lord! and don't leave home again without means. By the by, while I think of it, add the good woman, lay in a couple of cold trill, on which she had been busily at work while talking and looking up with a white twinkling of her eyes. 'I do believe you can get a good night's lodging at Harry Barrett's, who lives only half a mile from here, on the road south. He's a grand land for taking in strangers.'

She looked at her husband, and both smiled knowingly, for both were thinking that in case the rich uncle should find the beggar there, it might increase Stephen Barrett's chances of becoming the fortunate heir.

Sarah Jane now returned and handed the old man two small cold potatoes. He took them, turned them slowly over, examined 'em on all sides, and murmured:—

'They have eyes—but can they see? I think not—for if they could they'd blushed red, instead of keeping such a dark color.' Then glancing slowly round the neat, tidy, cheerful room, taking in three prim girls and their pious parent, he quickly tossed the potatoes in the lap of the astonished mistress, saying as he did so, 'I beg your pardon, madam, but I did not intend to rob you.'

'Go, you sinful, wicked old creature!' exclaimed the good dame, in holy horror, as the disgusted old man turned and went out and shut the door with a slam.

In less than half an hour the unfortunate wayfarer was trying his chance at the house of Harry Barrett.

'Come in,' said a strong, hearty, cheerful voice, in answer to his timid knock.

'He entered a largely, plainly furnished apartment, and beheld a group of six persons—father, mother, two sons and two daughters, seated around a pleasant fire, with a bright light on the table near them, and all seeming contented and happy. On seeing his visitor was an old man and a stranger, the master of the house arose and invited him to walk forward and take a seat, and all the others drew back respectfully, to enlarge the circle and give him the best place at the fire.'

'I have called,' said the old man, stopping and removing his hat from his white head, 'to ask if you would be kind enough to give me some food and lodging for the night.'

'Of course we will, my friend, and glad of a chance to help some poor fellow in need!' said Harry Barrett, in a frank, cordial tone. 'Sit down and make yourself at home! Here, give me your hat! Come, girls, hurry up something warm for the old gentleman, who is wet, tired and chilled through, as I can readily see. You ought not to have been out so long in this storm, father?'

'No, I know,' returned the old gentleman, holding his trembling hands to the fire, 'but the persons I applied to wouldn't take me in.'

'What! refused lodging to an old man like you on such a night, in this Christian community?' exclaimed the indignant host, 'who were the inhospitable wretches?'

'The man described the houses and people where he had called.

'I see,' said the host, with a grim smile; 'I understand! The first family kicked you out?'

'Alas!' 'The second prayed you out?'

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'Almost,' again smiled the stranger. 'Well, they are both my relatives, but I am ashamed to own them.'

'They said, by way of excuse,' pursued the old man, 'that they were expecting a rich uncle from India, who wouldn't like to see a beggar about.'

'Aye, my friend, and we are expecting the same rich uncle, too—an eccentric old bachelor, who says he wants to make one of us heir to his vast possessions. Two gaily mounted messengers arrived this evening to say that he would be here to night or to-morrow, probably the latter. But whenever he does come, he will find us as we are; and if he don't like our looks, or the company we keep, he can take himself off again.'

'Nay, my friend,' said the aged stranger, rising in some trepidation, 'do not, for the world, let my presence jeopardize your interests with your rich kinsman! I will merely get something to eat, and travel on till I find another lodging.'

'No, you won't leave this house to night for all the money that the Indies can turn out! Sit down again, sir, sit down, and make yourself at home. I know the duty of a man who has faith in God, and I'm going to do it. What is his money to me? I can't eat it, nor drink it, nor wear it, nor carry it into the other world; and I'm sure it won't bring me any happiness that I do not now enjoy, and I know it couldn't ever compensate for one moment's pain. No! let Joseph Barrett settle his money as he chooses—I arrange my conscience to suit myself.'

'God bless you!' murmured the old man, in a trembling voice, and bowing his head upon his hands he wept in silence.

He remained at that hospitable house during the night, and was entertained like an honored guest. The next day being fair he took his leave. As he was about to depart, Harry Barrett put a crown into his hand, saying:—

'Take it, my friend, and not a word! I don't know who you are, and I've not felt it my duty to inquire; but this I know—from your appearance, manners, and language, that you are not a common beggar, and that you have been better days, which I sincerely hope you may regain. It is as much as my circumstances will justify, and it may, perhaps, serve to keep you from starving some night or sleeping by the wayside.'

'God will repay you,' said the old man, solemnly; and he walked slowly away, wiping the tears from his eyes.

'He has already,' mused Harry Barrett, placing his hand upon his heart, 'I have it here, princely and interest.'

Long and vain did the selfish families of Moses and Stephen Barrett look for the appearance of their rich uncle from India, in a carriage and four, and great was their disappointment and vexation thereat.

Then came the intelligence that he was sick in London. Next came the news that he was dead and had left a will. What an intense desire to know the contents of that will! What a wild, furious excitement when its contents became known!

To Moses Barrett he devised one pound to buy a collar for the dog that his precious son had threatened to set on a beggar.

To Stephen Barrett he had bequeathed one pound three pence—the pound to be devoted to the parish poor—the three pence to buy potatoes for beggars, with the hope that he and his pious family would put their trust in the Lord.

To Harry Barrett, and his heirs forever, he had willed all the remainder of his vast wealth, some half a million pounds sterling, with a hope that he and they would sometimes recall with pleasure the visit of the old, white-haired man they had once so kindly entertained.

The old beggar of that dark, rainy night, was no other than Joshua Barrett himself!

'An inquisitive chap, such as is to be met with everywhere,' asked a soldier with an empty sleeve how he lost his arm.

'In a thrashing machine,' answered the soldier.

'Were you ranning the machine?'

'Well, no, Gen Grant had charge.'

A New Gas Light.—An ingenious, but certainly not very inviting mode, of procuring gas for illuminating purposes has been proposed in France. A French chemist estimates that a human corpse of ordinary dimensions, by a process of combustion in retorts, may be made to yield 7,500 cubic feet of illuminating gas, at a cost of about \$1.6. This process is certainly making light of death.

A son-of-a-bitch juvenile dandy said to his partner, 'Don't you think my moustaches are becoming?' To which she replied, 'Coming, but not true.'

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